

II. Remarks

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested.

Claims 86-103 are pending in the application. Claims 86 and 97 are independent.

Applicants have added new Claims 86-101 to afford themselves a scope of protection commensurate with the disclosure. The new claims are fully supported in the specification and Drawings, and are believed to be allowable for the reasons to be developed below.

The undersigned would like to thank Examiners McGowan and Will for the cordial and productive interview of February 1, 2010. The Examiners' helpful comments and suggestions were instrumental in preparing this response.

For the Examiner McGowan's convenience, the features of the newly-added claims are supported, *inter alia*, by Figs. 2-5, and 11-12, and their corresponding disclosures.

The cancellation of the previously-pending claims should moot the rejections under 35 USC §§ 112 and 103 set forth at pages 2-8 of the Office Action. The undersigned would like to thank Examiner McGowan for the detailed discussion of the art as applied to the claims; such detail is very instrumental in refining the issues.

As discussed at the interview, each of the independent claims recites a novel, non-obvious combination of structure whereby a minimum tillage apparatus (or implement) includes the recited frame, walking axles (or two sets of wheels), mounting structures, coil springs, coulter wheels, tines (or spike harrows), and rolling harrow. Notably, the mounting structures include a hollow strut, horizontal slot, support member (or upper cap), and support a single coulter wheel. As also discussed at the interview, each coil spring upper shank, coil portion, and

lower shank is configured such that when the lower shank biases upward, the corresponding coil tightens; substantially half of the claimed coil portions being wound in the clockwise direction, and substantially the other half of the claimed coil portions being wound in the counter clockwise direction.

In contrast, and as also discussed at the interview, none of the cited art (individually or in combination) discloses or suggests such a unique combination. For example, Rawson was cited in the August 20, 2009 Office Action for its disclosure of a vertical shaft mounted in a hollow strut and configured to provide rotation about a vertical axis. However, as discussed at the interview, the purpose of Rawson's invention is to provide more than one coultter wheel on each mounting structure. See Col. 1, lines 23-45:

DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to *an arrangement for mounting a plurality of coultter units having upstanding shanks on a tool bar*, and wherein *one or more mountings are eliminated for the plurality of coultter units*, thus taking up less mounting space, providing for the mounting of the units to be more compact, and providing for easier mounting of the units for the operator.

...
This arrangement *eliminates an upstanding shank for each lateral pair of coultter units*, permitting for a preset pair of coultter units more easily and readily mountable within more confined spaces on a tool bar. (emphasis supplied)

On the other hand, the pending claims require that each claimed mounting structure supports a single coultter wheel. Thus, Rawson teaches away from the claimed invention.

As additionally discussed at the interview, the claims also require that the coil springs tighten upon upward flexure. Applicants respectfully submit that at least one of the

oppositely-wound springs of Wright unwinds upon upward flexure. Moreover, Wright is directed to a rake, and not a minimum tillage apparatus.

In view of the above, it is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance, and a Notice thereof is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 625-3507. All correspondence should continue to be directed to the address of record.

Respectfully submitted,

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